

Weekly Report for week ending March 20, 2015 (Superfund Division)

Hot Issues

None

Accomplishments

Emergency Response to Acme Galvanizing Fire, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Press Interest/Coverage: Extensive local coverage, including by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

On March 16, 2015 EPA responded to a propane explosion and subsequent fire at the Acme Galvanizing facility in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The Milwaukee Fire Department Hazmat Team identified elevated levels of hydrogen cyanide gas inside the facility after the fire was extinguished. EPA assisted with air monitoring and oversight of the containment and collection of contaminated firefighting water. Approximately 3,500 gallons of non-hazardous water reached the Kinnickinnic River prior to the arrival of Acme Galvanizing's cleanup contractor. EPA completed its response on March 17, 2015. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources will be overseeing the remaining cleanup activities.

Contact: Kathy Halbur, On-Scene Coordinator, (920) 662-5424



Area of Explosion at the Former Maintenance Shop



Responders Preparing to Assess Hydrogen Cyanide Concentrations



Removal of Contaminated Water from the Facility

Press Interest Detail:



Propane tank explosions suspected in fire on Milwaukee's south side
By Ashley Luthern and Annysa Johnson March 16, 2015
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

<http://www.jsonline.com/news/milwaukee/propane-tank-explosions-suspected-in-fire-on-milwaukee-s-south-side-b99462945z1-296429491.html>

Cleanup continued Monday afternoon after a two-alarm fire and propane tank explosions ripped through an industrial building on Milwaukee's south side.

The fire was reported at 7:52 a.m. Monday at Acme Galvanizing, 2730 S. 19th St., near Pulaski Park, and plumes of smoke from the fire could be seen from a distance. No injuries were reported.

Acme Galvanizing has an 80,000-square-foot facility on the property that specializes in zinc electroplating and hot-dip galvanizing.

The fire was concentrated in a separate building where propane and other chemicals were stored and away from the main processing facility, said Deputy Chief Terry Lintonen.

The first-responding firefighters saw heavy fire and continuing explosions when they arrived and quickly called a second alarm, Lintonen said.

The small storage building was destroyed, and damage estimates were not immediately available, Lintonen said.

The main building was burned slightly on the eaves, but was not substantially damaged, he said.

The department's hazardous materials crew was called to the scene, because such businesses tend to have a lot of chemicals on the premises that are caustic or poisonous not only in water, but also possibly if they burn, Lintonen said. The Hazmat team helped identify the chemicals and monitored the situation, he said.

As a precaution, firefighters and police officers evacuated some of the buildings that were downwind and within a block of Acme, Lintonen said. The fire was deemed under control at 9:07 a.m., he said.

Several other agencies also monitored the fire, including the state Department of Natural Resources, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District.

The cause remains under investigation by the Milwaukee Fire and Police departments.

About four dozen workers, most wearing red hard hats, gathered behind police tape as firefighters fought the blaze.

One worker said the incident took place when a worker was filling the propane and acetylene tanks and one of the tanks ignited. All the workers escaped safely, and as they fled they could hear the tanks exploding one at a time, employee Mike Kruckeberg said.

"I ran over with a fire extinguisher. It was too far gone at that point," employee John Trapp said.

Trapp said at that point they started evacuating.

"We just got everybody out," he said.

"I just saw all these guys running out and thought, 'Are they on strike,'" said Mary Lou Boettcher, who works in data entry and invoicing at the firm. "Somebody said, 'No, it's a fire, and we ran out.'"

Emergency Response to Allegan Metal Finishing Fire, Allegan, Michigan

Press Interest/Coverage: Local coverage by Fox 17 News and WOOD-TV

On March 15, 2015 EPA responded to a fire at the Allegan Metal Finishing facility in Allegan, Michigan. The facility is a zinc plating shop that contained approximately 3,800 pounds of nitric acid and other chemicals. Several local fire departments responded to the fire, which destroyed the facility. The fire departments, Allegan County Sheriff's Office, and Michigan Department of Transportation implemented a half-mile evacuation zone and closed highway M-89. EPA provided air monitoring and technical assistance. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) also responded and mobilized the 51st Civil Support Team to assist. After EPA completed air monitoring and found no contaminant levels of concern, the Allegan County Health Department (ACHD) lifted the evacuation. No off-site impacts were observed; however, large amounts of waste on site will require a remediation plan from the property owner with MDEQ providing oversight. EPA and MDEQ also requested fencing and security to monitor the

site until the cleanup is complete. Given the sandy soils in the area, there is a concern that chemicals mixed with water from the firefighting may contaminate private wells in the area. These wells will be evaluated by MDEQ and ACHD. The cause of the fire is still under investigation.

Contact: Andrew Maguire, On-Scene Coordinator, (312) 353-3782



Facility Burning in the Distance



Destroyed Facility

Press Interest Detail:



Crews spend Sunday battling fire at Allegan Metal Finishing Company
March 15, 2015 Fox 17 News

<http://fox17online.com/2015/03/15/crews-battle-fire-at-allegan-metal-finishing-company/>

ALLEGAN, Mich.— Crews continue to battle flames and aerial contaminants Sunday, after a large business fire was sparked earlier in the day.

The call originally came in just after 1:30 a.m. Sunday. Crews quickly arrived on scene at Allegan Metal Finishing Company (AMFCO) in the 1200 block of Lincoln Road.

Several roads in the area were shutdown and residencies within a half-mile were evacuated. Both westbound and eastbound M-89 are closed between 29th Ave and 111th Ave because of the fire.

As of 5:30 p.m. Sunday, Allegan County Dispatch said the evacuated area was still unsafe for residents to return to.

Sunday afternoon, the workforce development association Michigan Works! sent out messages to the community offering those affected some help following the fire. Representatives from Kent, Allegan and Barry Counties will be at Blessed Sacrament Church, 110 N. Cedar Street in Allegan, on Monday, March 16th at 10:30am.

The message stated that their staff will provide information for the more than 80 employees affected by the fire on how to apply for unemployment and how to take the next steps in exploring employment opportunities.



Blaze destroys Allegan Metal Finishing Co.
March 15, 2015 WOOD-TV

<http://woodtv.com/2015/03/15/crews-battling-fire-at-allegan-business-residents-evacuated/>

Blaze destroys Allegan Metal Finishing Co.

ALLEGAN TOWNSHIP, Mich. (WOOD) — A massive blaze at a business just outside of Allegan left dozens of people out of work.

The fire broke out around 1:30 a.m. Sunday at Allegan Metal Finishing Company, located on M-89 south of 113th Avenue. Several explosions rocked the plant throughout the early morning hours. Late Sunday afternoon, fire crews were still dumping water on the building.

Authorities say there is no hope of salvaging the structure.

The cause of the fire was not yet known as of Monday, but it is believed to have sparked in the northwest corner of the building. Investigators from the Allegan Fire Department and Michigan State Police will comb through the wreckage to try to determine how it started.

No one was at the business when the fire started, and no one was hurt.

Residents within half a mile of the blaze were told to evacuate Sunday due to air quality concerns linked to the chemicals stored at the building, and a stretch of both eastbound and westbound M-89 (Lincoln Road) was shut down for some 18 hours as firefighters worked to clean up the scene.

“It was very dangerous. It was very scary. All of the chemicals being there at AMFCO, it was pretty nerve-racking, I’ll tell you that much,” evacuated resident Dustin Schnider said.

Later Sunday, officials determined that the air in the area was safe and the evacuation order was lifted around 6:25 p.m. M-89 between 29th Avenue and 111th Avenue reopened not long before 8 p.m., according to a release from the Michigan Department of Transportation.

Allegan Metal Finishing Company employed more than 80 people — all of whom are now without work.

“He [owner Walter Sosnowski] wants to rebuild, but he is talking about a couple of years before it gets done,” said former AMFCO employee Clarence Van Polen. “[Sosnowski] is pretty upset right now and he probably doesn’t even know what he’s doing. He is used to taking care of us and now he feels like he let all of us down. There’s about a hundred of us and he feels like he let us all down.”

“We were all of his family. We loved working for him and he loved having us work for him,” added fellow former employee Joshua Miller.

Michigan Works! from Allegan, Barry and Kent counties had staff members at an Allegan church on Monday morning to help workers affected by the fire apply for unemployment and take the next steps in seeking new jobs.

Calls to AMFCO management seeking comment were not returned by Monday afternoon.

Emergency Response to Atlantic Relocation Services Oil Spill, Indianapolis, Indiana

Press Interest/Coverage: None

On March 13, 2015 EPA responded to a diesel fuel spill that impacted two miles of Cheeney Creek, a tributary of the West Fork White River, in Indianapolis, Indiana. The West Fork White River is a drinking water source for the City of Indianapolis. The State requested EPA assistance with sampling and oversight of the response. The source of the spill is believed to be an 8,000-gallon aboveground storage tank at the Atlantic Relocation Systems (ARS) facility. The cause and amount of the spill are still unknown; however, ARS has agreed to complete the cleanup under EPA oversight. Response actions to date have recovered 1,200 gallons of oil. Additional

wastes include over 20,000 gallons of oily water, one drum of oily sludge, and 93 bags of oil saturated sorbents.

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8,000-Gallon Aboveground Storage Tank



Oil Contained by Sorbents



Containment Boom in Affected Pond

Emergency Response to Oil Release at the ECI Sites, East Chicago, Indiana

Press Interest/Coverage: None

On March 12, 2015 EPA responded to a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) report of several oiled and dead birds along the Lake George Branch of the Indiana Harbor Ship Canal in East Chicago, Indiana. The site is the location of the former ECI Refinery and two areas of historic investigation and response efforts: the ECI South Tank Farm and ECI West Tank Farm Sites. The Atlantic Richfield Company (Arco) maintains containment and sorbent boom in the Canal and has deployed wildlife deterrence measures. These measures were inadequate during waterfowl migration season, which is expected to last six to eight weeks.

EPA responded to the release and directed Arco to place additional boom in the Canal, conduct additional hazing measures to deter waterfowl, mobilize wildlife specialists to document wildlife loss, and coordinate wildlife rehabilitation measures. Arco responded and mobilized additional personnel and resources to the spill. Approximately 15 dead migratory birds have been found, collected, and documented to date. EPA is coordinating activities with USFWS, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, U.S. Coast Guard, East Chicago Waterway Management District, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. EPA continues to develop long-term measures to mitigate the discharge of oil into the Canal.

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Distressed Diver Ducks Adjacent to Boom



Arco Personnel Maintaining Boom



Additional Boom Deployed along the Bank of the Canal

Removal Action Initiated at the Shanfeld Iron and Metal Site, East St. Louis, Illinois

Press Interest/Coverage: None

This week, EPA initiated a time-critical removal action at the Shanfeld Iron and Metal Site in East St. Louis, Illinois. The site is a three-acre abandoned metal producing facility located in a mixed industrial and residential setting. Former operations at the facility consisted of using coal and coke-fired ovens for smelting iron and lead ore into bulk units for shipping. Currently, the property is overgrown with trees, brush, and weeds with graveled areas between the former buildings. The removal action will involve the excavation and off-site disposal of lead-contaminated soil and will take approximately six weeks to complete.

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Site Location



Trees Requiring Chipping Prior to Removal of Lead-Impacted Soils



Field Office Adjacent to Site